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Serial No: 10/728,447

WHAT IS CLAIMED IS:

1. (Currently amended) A process for assembly of a combination of a beverage container having a cap and a snack food product preconfigured to be mounted over said cap and dispensing said combination from a pre-existing vending machine having an internal product storage area configured with individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments in communication with a consumer accessible area of said pre-existing vending machine, whereby said beverage container and mounted preconfigured snack food product combination is mounted within one of said individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments thereby occupying the same space within one of said individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments as a single product container alone and poised to be dispensed from said internal product storage area of said pre-existing vending machine, the process comprising the steps of:

transporting filled and capped beverage containers and preconfigured snack food products to ~~the site of~~ said pre-existing vending machine for the purpose of performing ~~the maintenance function~~ of said pre-existing vending machine; and,

performing ~~ance of~~ said maintenance ~~function~~ including the replenishment of said pre-existing vending machine internal product storage area configured with individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments with said combination of beverage container and preconfigured snack food product assembled as a unit;

replenishment comprising the steps of;

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selection of said filled beverage container and said preconfigured snack food product based upon prior sales history of said pre-existing vending machine;

assembling said preconfigured snack food product and said beverage container as a unit with a retaining device and inserting said unit into an empty individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartment; and,

setting pre-selected vending machine condition for release of the price-point for said individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments, whereby the said posed contents to be dispensed-released from said product storage rack compartment to said consumer accessible area for pickup by the consumer are released upon the condition of the consumer inserting sufficient currency into said pre-existing vending machine as established by said pre-existing vending machine condition for release set price-point and entering a selection of the contents of said product storage rack compartment thereby releasing and dispensing into said consumer accessible area said selected poised contents stored unit of a combined beverage container and preconfigured snack food ~~container-product~~ thereafter said beverage container and preconfigured snack food product being easily removed from said consumer accessible area as a unit and thereafter separated by removal of said retainer device by said consumer for consumption of the contents of said beverage container and said preconfigured snack food product.

2. (Currently amended) A process for assembly of a combination of a beverage container having a packaging ring and a cap tightened above said packaging ring and a snack food product preconfigured to be mounted over said cap and said packaging ring and

dispensing said combination from a pre-existing vending machine having an internal product storage area configured with individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments in communication with a consumer accessible area of said pre-existing vending machine, whereby said beverage container and mounted preconfigured snack food product combination is mounted within one of said individually releasable product storage rack compartments thereby occupying the same space within said individually releasable product storage rack compartment as a single product container alone and poised to be dispensed from said internal product storage area of said pre-existing vending machine, the process comprising the steps of: transporting filled and capped beverage containers and preconfigured snack food products to ~~the site of~~ said pre-existing vending machine for the purpose of performing ~~the maintenance function~~ of said pre-existing vending machine; and, performing ~~an~~ ancee of said maintenance ~~function~~ including the replenishment of said pre-existing vending machine internal product storage area individually releasable product storage rack compartments with said combination of beverage container and preconfigured snack food product assembled as a unit; replenishment comprising the steps of;

selection of said filled beverage container and said preconfigured snack food product based upon prior sales history of said pre-existing vending machine;

assembling said preconfigured snack food product and said beverage container as a unit with a retaining device and inserting said unit into an empty product storage rack compartment; and,

setting pre-selected vending machine condition for release of the price point for said individually selectable product

storage rack compartment, whereby the said posed contents to be ~~dispensed-released~~ from said product storage rack compartment to said consumer accessible area for pickup by the consumer are released upon the condition of the consumer inserting sufficient currency into said vending machine as established by said pre-existing vending machine condition for release ~~set price point~~ and entering a selection of the contents of said product storage rack compartment thereby releasing and dispensing into said consumer accessible area said selected posed contents stored unit of a combined beverage container and preconfigured snack food product ~~container~~ thereafter said beverage and snack being easily removed from said consumer accessible area as a unit and thereafter separated by removal of said retaining device by said consumer for consumption of said beverage and said snack.

3. (Original) The process according to claim 1 wherein said vending machine is a refrigerated beverage vending machine.
4. (Original) The process according to claim 1 wherein said vending machine is a refrigerated snack vending machine.
5. (Original) The process according to claim 2 wherein said vending machine is a refrigerated beverage vending machine.
6. (Original) The process according to claim 2 wherein said vending machine is a refrigerated snack vending machine.
7. (Currently amended) A process for assembly of a combination of a beverage container having a cap and a snack food product preconfigured to be mounted over said cap and dispensing said combination from a pre-existing vending machine having an

internal product storage area configured with individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments in communication with a consumer accessible area of said pre-existing vending machine, whereby said beverage container and mounted preconfigured snack food product combination is mounted within one of said individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments, thereby occupying the same space within one of said individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments as a single product container alone and poised to be dispensed from said internal product storage area of said pre-existing vending machine, the process comprising the steps of:

transporting filled and capped beverage containers and preconfigured snack food products to ~~the site of~~ said pre-existing vending machine for the purpose of performing ~~the maintenance function~~ of said pre-existing vending machine; and,

performing ~~ance of~~ said maintenance ~~function~~ including the replenishment of said pre-existing vending machine internal product storage area configured with individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments with said combination of beverage container and preconfigured snack food product assembled as a unit;

replenishment comprising the steps of;

selection of said filled beverage container and said preconfigured snack food product based upon prior sales history of said pre-existing vending machine;

assembling said preconfigured snack food product and said beverage container as a unit with a retaining device, said retaining device ~~is~~ fabricated of a limiting disk and a beverage cap attachment mounted to one side of said limiting disk whereby upon engagement of said beverage cap attachment with said cap, said

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limiting disk is positioned to prevent said preconfigured snack food product from disengagement over said cap of said beverage container until said retaining device is detached from said beverage cap;

inserting said unit into an empty individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartment; and,
setting pre-selected vending machine condition for release of the price point for said individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments, whereby the said posed contents to be ~~dispensed~~ released from said product storage rack compartments to said consumer accessible area for pickup by the consumer are released upon the condition of the consumer inserting sufficient currency into said pre-existing vending machine as established by said pre-existing vending machine condition for release ~~set price point~~ and entering a selection of the contents of said product storage rack compartment thereby releasing and dispensing into said consumer accessible area said selected poised contents stored unit of a combined beverage container and preconfigured snack food ~~container-product~~ thereafter said beverage container and preconfigured snack food product being easily removed from said consumer accessible area as a unit and thereafter separated by removal of said retainer device by said consumer for consumption of the contents of said beverage container and said preconfigured snack food product.

8. (Original) The process according to claim 7 wherein said beverage cap attachment further comprises a plurality of retaining rings mounted inside said beverage cap attachment and disengably engageable with the outside of said beverage cap.
9. (Original) The process according to claim 7 wherein said beverage cap attachment further comprises a plurality of flexible inwardly

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curving fingers extending from the edge of said beverage cap attachment remote from said limiting disk whereby upon engagement of said beverage cap attachment with said beverage cap, said fingers engage said packaging ring.

10. (Currently amended) A process for assembly of a combination of a beverage container having a packaging ring and a cap tightened above said packaging ring and a snack food product preconfigured to be mounted over said cap and said packaging ring and dispensing said combination from a pre-existing vending machine having an internal product storage area configured with individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments in communication with a consumer accessible area of said pre-existing vending machine, whereby said beverage container and mounted preconfigured snack food product combination is mounted within one of said individually releasable product storage rack compartments thereby occupying the same space within said individually releasable product storage rack compartment as a single product container alone and poised to be dispensed from said internal product storage area of said pre-existing vending machine, the process comprising the steps of: transporting filled and capped beverage containers and preconfigured snack food products to ~~the site of~~ said pre-existing vending machine for the purpose of performing ~~the maintenance function~~ of said pre-existing vending machine; and, performing ~~ance~~ of said maintenance ~~function~~ including the replenishment of said pre-existing vending machine internal product storage area individually releasable product storage rack compartments with said combination of beverage container and preconfigured snack food product assembled as a unit; replenishment comprising the steps of;

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selection of said filled beverage container and said preconfigured snack food product based upon prior sales history of said vending machine;

assembling said preconfigured snack food product and said beverage container as a unit with a retaining device, said retaining device is fabricated of a limiting disk and a beverage cap attachment mounted to one side of said limiting disk whereby upon engagement of said beverage cap attachment with said cap, said limiting disk is positioned to prevent said preconfigured snack food product from disengagement over said cap and packaging ring of said beverage container until said retaining device is detached from said beverage cap;

inserting said unit into an empty product storage rack compartment; and,

setting pre-selected vending machine condition for release of the price point for said individually selectable product storage rack compartment, whereby the contents to be dispensed released from said product storage rack compartment to said consumer accessible area for pickup by the consumer are released upon the condition of the consumer inserting sufficient currency into said vending machine as established by said pre-existing vending machine condition for release set price point and entering a selection of the contents of said product storage rack compartment thereby releasing and dispensing into said consumer accessible area said selected posed contents stored unit of a combined beverage container and preconfigured snack food product container thereafter said beverage and snack being easily removed from said consumer accessible area as a unit and thereafter separated by removal of said retaining device by said consumer for consumption of said beverage and said snack.

11. (Original) The process according to claim 10 wherein said beverage cap attachment further comprises a plurality of fingers extending from the end of said beverage cap attachment remote from said limiting disk and disengagibly engageable with said packaging ring.
12. (Original) The process according to claim 10 wherein said beverage cap attachment further comprises a plurality of flexible inwardly curving fingers extending from the edge of said beverage cap attachment remote from said limiting disk whereby upon engagement of said beverage cap attachment with said beverage cap, said fingers engage said packaging ring.
13. (Withdrawn) A process for assembly of a combination of a beverage container having a cap and a snack food product preconfigured to be mounted over said cap and dispensing said combination from a pre-existing vending machine having an internal product storage area configured with individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments in communication with a consumer accessible area of said vending machine, whereby said beverage and mounted configured snack combination is mounted within one of said releasable product storage rack compartments thereby occupying the same space within said compartment as a single product container alone and poised to be dispensed from said internal product storage area of said vending machine, the process comprising the steps of:

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transporting filled and capped beverage containers and preconfigured snack products to the site of said vending machine for the purpose of performing the maintenance function of said vending machine; and,

performance of said maintenance function including the replenishment of said vending machine internal storage rack compartments with said combination of beverage and configured snack assembled as a unit;

replenishment comprising the steps of;

selection of said filled beverage container and said preconfigured snack based upon prior sales history of said vending machine;

assembling said snack and said beverage as a unit with a containment cage and inserting said unit into an empty product storage rack compartment; and,

setting the price point for said product storage rack compartment, the contents to be dispensed from said product storage rack compartment to said consumer accessible area for pickup by the consumer upon the condition of the consumer inserting sufficient currency into said vending machine as established by said set price point and entering a selection of the contents of said product storage rack compartment thereby releasing and dispensing into said consumer accessible area said selected stored unit of a combined beverage container and snack food container thereafter said beverage and snack being easily removed from said consumer accessible area as a unit and thereafter separated by said consumer for consumption of said beverage and said snack.

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14. (Withdrawn) A process for assembly of a combination of a beverage container having a packaging ring and a cap tightened above said packaging ring and a snack food product preconfigured to be mounted over said cap and said packaging ring and dispensing said combination from a pre-existing vending machine having an internal product storage area configured with individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments in communication with a consumer accessible area of said vending machine, whereby said beverage and mounted configured snack combination is mounted within one of said releasable product storage rack compartments thereby occupying the same space within said compartment as a single product container alone and poised to be dispensed from said internal product storage area of said vending machine, the process comprising the steps of:

transporting filled and capped beverage containers and preconfigured snack products to the site of said vending machine for the purpose of performing the maintenance function of said vending machine; and,

performance of said maintenance function including the replenishment of said vending machine internal storage rack compartments with said combination of beverage and configured snack assembled as a unit;

replenishment comprising the steps of;

selection of said filled beverage container and said preconfigured snack based upon prior sales history of said vending machine;

assembling said snack and said beverage as a unit with a containment cage and inserting said unit into an empty product storage rack compartment; and.

setting the price point for said product storage rack compartment, the contents to be dispensed from said product storage rack compartment to said consumer accessible area for pickup by the consumer upon the condition of the consumer inserting sufficient currency into said vending machine as established by said set price point and entering a selection of the contents of said product storage rack compartment thereby releasing and dispensing into said consumer accessible area said selected stored unit of a combined beverage container and snack food container thereafter said beverage and snack being easily removed from said consumer accessible area as a unit and thereafter separated by said consumer for consumption of said beverage and said snack.

15. (Withdrawn) The process according to claim 13 wherein said containment cage device is fabricated of foldable sheet material as a cylindrical shaped cage having a base further comprising:
a plurality of separating strips spaced apart and extending from said base to the cap of the beverage to display said configured snack package; and,
a plurality of fingers extending upward from said base and folded to lie along the neck of said beverage, said fingers of a size to extend from said base and be in contact with said packaging ring;
whereby under the condition of said configured snack package inserted within said cage and said cage installed on the neck of said beverage said configured snack holds said fingers along the outside of said beverage container and the ends of said fingers are positioned under said packaging ring to prevent said cage from disengaging from said beverage container.

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16. (Withdrawn) The process according to claim 14 wherein said containment cage device is fabricated of foldable sheet material as a cylindrical shaped cage having a base further comprising:
a plurality of separating strips spaced apart and extending from said base to the cap of the beverage to display said configured snack package; and,
a plurality of fingers extending upward from said base and folded to lay along the neck of said beverage, said fingers of a size to extend from said base and be in contact with said packaging ring;
whereby under the condition of said configured snack package inserted within said cage and said cage installed on the neck of said beverage said configured snack holds said fingers along the outside of said beverage container and the ends of said fingers are positioned under said packaging ring to prevent said cage from disengaging from said beverage container.
17. (Withdrawn) The process according to claim 15 said containment cage device further comprising:
a plurality of folding platforms attached to said separating extensions remote from said base in a position to be foldable over the top of the cap of said beverage;
a plurality of folding extensions of said separating strips the ends of said folding extensions having engageable slots;
whereby said platform may be folder over the top of said cap and thereafter said extensions folder over said platform, at least one opposing pair of folding extensions being engageable in a closing position over said platform by engaging of said slots.
18. (Withdrawn) The process according to claim 16 said containment cage device further comprising:

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a plurality of folding platforms attached to said separating extensions remote from said base in a position to be foldable over the top of the cap of said beverage;

a plurality of folding extensions of said separating strips the ends of said folding extensions having engageable slots;

whereby said platform may be folder over the top of said cap and thereafter said extensions folder over said platform, at least one opposing pair of folding extensions being engageable in a closing position over said platform by engaging of said slots.

19. (Withdrawn) The process according to claim 17 wherein preselected optional promotional material is mounted on said containment cage platform and held on said platform by engagement of said opposing extensions.

20. (Withdrawn) The process according to claim 18 wherein preselected optional promotional material is mounted on said containment cage platform and held on said platform by engagement of said opposing extensions.

21. (Original) The process according to claim 11 wherein said vending machine is a refrigerated beverage vending machine.

22. (Original) The process according to claim 11 wherein said vending machine is a refrigerated snack vending machine.

23. (Original) The process according to claim 12 wherein said vending machine is a refrigerated beverage vending machine.

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24. (Original) The process according to claim 12 wherein said vending machine is a refrigerated snack vending machine.
25. (Currently amended) The process of pre-assembly of a combination of a beverage container having a cap and a snack food product preconfigured to be mounted over said cap as a unit whereby said beverage container and mounted configured snack combination occupies essentially the same shelf foot-print space as the beverage container alone and delivery of said unit to a point of sale, the process comprising the steps of:
selection of said beverage container and preconfigured snack food product based upon the prior sales history of said point of sale;
pre-assembling said beverage container and said preconfigured snack food product as a unit by means of a retaining device;
transporting said pre-assembled units to said point of sale;
additionally transporting filled and capped beverage containers and preconfigured snack food products to said point of sale and performing the restocking of said point of sale;
performance of said restocking including the delivery of the pre-assembled units and augmenting said restocking with assembling said preconfigured snack food products and said beverage container as a unit by means of a retainer device based upon the sales history and current inventory held at said point of sale.
26. (Original) The process according to claim 25 wherein said augmenting said restocking with the preassembled includes the steps of:
selection of said filled beverage container and said preconfigured snack based upon prior sales;
assembling said snack and said beverage as a unit with a retaining device fabricated of a limiting disk and a beverage cap attachment

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mounted to one side of said limiting disk whereby upon engagement of said beverage cap attachment with said cap, said limiting disk is positioned to prevent said preconfigured snack from disengagement over said cap of said beverage until said retaining device is detached from said beverage cap; and, delivery of said assembled units to said off the shelf point of sale.

27. (Original) The process according to Claim 26 wherein said beverage cap attachment further comprises a plurality of retaining rings mounted inside said beverage cap attachment and disengably engageable with the outside of said beverage cap.
28. (Original) The process according to claim 26 wherein said beverage cap attachment further comprises a plurality of flexible inwardly curving fingers extending from the edge of said beverage cap attachment remote from said limiting disk whereby upon engagement of said beverage cap attachment with said beverage cap, said fingers engage said cap.
29. (Withdrawn) The process according to claim 25 wherein said preassembly of said snack and beverage as a unit is by means of a containment cage fabricated of foldable sheet material as a cylindrical shaped cage having a base further comprising:
a plurality of separating strips spaced apart and extending from said base to the cap of the beverage to display said configured snack package; and,
a plurality of fingers extending upward from said base and folded to lie along the neck of said beverage, said fingers of a size to extend from said base and be in contact with said packaging ring;
whereby under the condition of said configured snack package inserted within said cage and said cage installed on the neck of

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said beverage said configured snack holds said fingers along the outside of said beverage container and the ends of said fingers are positioned under said packaging ring to prevent said cage from disengaging from said beverage container.

30. (Withdrawn) The process according to claim 29 said containment cage further comprising:
a plurality of folding platforms attached to said separating extensions remote from said base in a position to be foldable over the top of the cap of said beverage;
a plurality of folding extensions of said separating strips the ends of said folding extensions having engageable slots;
whereby said platform may be folder over the top of said cap and thereafter said extensions folder over said platform, at least one opposing pair of folding extensions being engageable in a closing position over said platform by engaging of said slots.
31. (Withdrawn) The process according to claim 30 wherein preselected optional promotional material is mounted on said containment cage platform and held on said platform by engagement of said opposing extensions.
32. (Currently amended) A process for assembly of a combination of a beverage container having a cap and a snack food product preconfigured to be mounted over said cap and dispensing said combination in place of a single product such as from a pre-existing vending machine having an internal product storage area configured with individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments in communication with a consumer accessible area of said vending machine, whereby said beverage container and mounted preconfigured snack food product combination is

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mounted within one of said releasable product storage rack compartments thereby occupying the same space within said compartment as a single product container alone and poised to be dispensed from said internal product storage area of said pre-existing vending machine, and off-the shelf sales, the process comprising the steps of:

transporting filled and capped beverage containers and preconfigured snack food products to ~~the site of~~ said sales and vending machine for the purpose of performing ~~the maintenance function~~ of said off-the shelf sales and pre-existing vending machine sales; and,

~~performing~~ ~~ance of~~ said maintenance ~~function~~ including the replenishment of inventory of said sales site shelf and pre-existing vending machine internal product storage area configured with individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartments with said combination of beverage container and preconfigured snack food product assembled as a unit;

replenishment comprising the steps of;

selection of said filled beverage container and said preconfigured snack food product based upon prior sales history of said sales site shelf and pre-existing vending machine;

assembling said preconfigured snack food product and said beverage container as a unit with a retaining device; ~~and~~

inserting said unit into an empty shelf space including said individually selectively releasable product storage rack compartment; and,

setting pre-selected vending machine condition for release of the price point for said product storage rack compartment, whereby the said posed contents to be sold off the shelf including being dispensed from said product storage rack compartment to said consumer accessible area for pickup by the consumer are released upon the condition of the consumer tendering or inserting sufficient

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currency into said pre-existing vending machine as established by said pre-existing vending machine condition for release set-price point and entering a selection of the contents of said product storage rack compartment thereby releasing and dispensing into said consumer accessible area said selected poised contents stored unit of a combined beverage container and preconfigured snack food product container thereafter said beverage container and snack food product being easily removed from said consumer accessible area as a unit and thereafter separated by removal of said retainer device by said consumer for consumption of said beverage container and said preconfigured snack food product.